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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 SANAA 000573

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA, NEA/ARP, NEA/EX, S/CT, CA, DS/DSS,
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TAGS: [ASEC](#) [AMGT](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [CASC](#) [YM](#) [EAC](#) [COUNTER](#) [TERRORISM](#)

SUBJECT: TFI201: SANAA SITREP ON VIOLENT ANTI-WAR
DEMONSTRATION

Classified By: Ambassador Edmund J. Hull for Reasons 1.5 (b,d)

1. (S/NF) Begin Summary: A violent demonstration that left several demonstrators dead and injured near the Embassy has dissipated and is over as of 1800 local time. Embassy reacted the Marine Security Guard and other measures in response and informed the Embassy and American community of the situation. ROYG security response was strong, including more than 2000 military and police forces, including three tanks, demonstrating the government's commitment to protecting Americans. End Summary.

Demonstration Ended; Situation Under Control

2. (S/NF) The demonstration that turned violent near the Embassy has dissipated and is over as of 1800 local. Demonstrators clashed with security forces at Sheraton Circle (about 1/4 mile from Embassy). Numbers were estimated at 5-7,000 demonstrators. Security forces used tear gas and shots in the air to attempt dispersal. Embassy personnel at the Sheraton reported witnessing shots being fired into the crowd, and RSO received reports from our Local Guard Force (LGF) that some demonstrators had weapons. Several demonstrators have been reportedly killed and several police injured. MFA informed DCM that more than 2000 military and police forces were deployed to respond to protect the Embassy.

3. (S/NF) A group of demonstrators gathered in Tahrir Square near the center of Sanaa after Friday prayers (approx. 1230) and moved through the city past the Sheraton Hotel to the intersection near the Sheraton (home of many Embassy TDYers).

4. (S/NF) Yemeni security, including busloads of riot police and water cannon, stopped the demonstrators from coming closer to the Embassy. Embassy received notice of a petition, and the DCM prepared to go out and receive it. Per Embassy policy, three petitioners are allowed to come to give the petition. However, the demonstrators could not decide which three should go and the Embassy refused to allow more. At that time, the crowd became unruly and began to throw stones. Yemeni security reacted by firing tear gas and shots in the air.

5. (S/NF) Several hundred demonstrators attempted to circle around the Embassy but were met by security forces firing in the air. They were unable to approach the entrance.

6. (S/NF) At this time, reports are that there are at least four demonstrators killed, many injured and nine police injured (mostly from stones). Al Jazeera reported six demonstrators killed at 1700 local time.

7. (S/NF) RSO was informed by Yemeni security that an Amcit journalist near the demonstration has been detained at a safe location for his safety.

Embassy Response

8. (S/NF) Embassy reacted the Marine Security Guards and advised the numerous personnel at the Embassy for StandFast to remain indoors to avoid any stray bullets coming down. RSO activated Embassy assets, including Force Protection Detachment and SOC-Yemen, to provide additional protection.

9. (S/NF) Warden Messages have been issued to Embassy community to inform them of the demonstration and the recommend they continue to stay put. Several radio announcements were made by RSO to inform Embassy personnel at their residences and at the ACC to continue StandFast.

10. (S/NF) Ambassador called a meeting at 1430 local to discuss internal defense measures at the Embassy and other issues. Recommendations discussed include:

-- a 24/7 watch being instituted from the Embassy roof.
-- LGF roving patrols continuing around the perimeter.

-- Ensuring strong command and control structures under the COM of all Embassy elements.

-- Rules of Engagement regarding response should an intruder(s) attempt to scale the perimeter walls, including use of tear gas, the use of lethal force if entry to the Chancery or Residence is attempted and procedures for LGF and RSO response.

-- DCM to ensure that Sheraton security is strengthened even further, with the possibility of pulling Embassy personnel there into the Embassy if necessary.

(S/NF) The 24th Marine Expeditionary Force called to give their current position off Djibouti and to inform that they can be available for rescue within 12 to 24 hours should the situation warrant a forced evacuation.

ROYG Response

11. (S/NF) DCM received phone calls from the MFA protocol director providing assurances to the Embassy that the ROYG is responding strongly to the situation. He told the DCM that more than 2000 military and police forces were deployed and that the forces were expected to continue keeping the demonstrators away from the Embassy. He said the ROYG has a "total commitment" to protect the Embassy and other diplomatic missions. He added that this commitment extended to Embassy residences and the Sheraton Hotel, where he realizes many Americans stay.

12. (S/NF) Ambassador took a call from the Presidency giving reassurance that they will take all "necessary measures" to protect the Embassy.

Press Reporting

13. (U) Television and wire services have been reporting the demonstrations since 1500 local time. Al-Jazeera reports that six people have been killed in fierce clashes between police and demonstrators near the Embassy. Wire services (AFP and Reuters) have reported that tens of thousands of demonstrators chanted "Death to America." and that one policeman and three protesters were killed. Yemeni television and radio has not reported any news of the demonstrations. However, the English language newspaper the Yemen Times has been running wire reports of the demonstrations on its website. PD has been fielding calls from press about the situation and is drafting press guidance.
HULL